## DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

## **COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO**



COMMUNICABLE DISEASE SECTION

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 22, 2013 NR# 13-05 CONTACT: Louis McNitt, MD, MPH TB Controller (800) 722-4794

## March 24<sup>th</sup> is World Tuberculosis (TB) Day

**San Bernardino**: World Tuberculosis (TB) Day is a worldwide event that aims to raise public awareness about TB and support TB control efforts to prevent and treat the disease. This year, as part of our ongoing effort to prevent the spread of TB and to educate the public about TB, the County of San Bernardino Department of Public Health observes this event on March 24, 2013. The theme for this year is "Stop TB in my lifetime," which encourages people all over the world to make an individual call for the elimination of TB.

"We are pleased that TB cases in San Bernardino County are declining, but recognize that TB continues to have a significant public health impact on our County," said Louise McNitt, MD, MPH, TB Controller for San Bernardino County. "We have come a long way in our efforts to control TB, but there is much more work to do."

TB is a disease that is spread person to person through the air when an infectious person coughs, shouts, sneezes, speaks or sings. TB usually affects the lungs, but it can attack any part of the body. If not properly treated, TB disease can be fatal. Patients who are immuno-compromised, such as those who are HIV-infected, and those who have other medical conditions, such as diabetes, cancer, or on dialysis, are among the most likely to develop significant complications.

The most common symptoms of TB disease include a cough for longer than 3 weeks, fever, drenching night sweats, fatigue, weight loss and loss of appetite. "The best way to prevent the spread of TB is with rapid diagnosis and treatment of TB; evaluation and treatment of people who have been in contact with TB patients," said Dr. McNitt. "Increasing awareness about TB in the community also helps to make sure that people with TB get diagnosed quickly and get appropriate care."

For information about Tuberculosis, please contact the County of San Bernardino Department of Public Health, Communicable Disease Section at 1-800-722-4794 or visit our website at <a href="http://www.sbcounty.gov/dph">http://www.sbcounty.gov/dph</a>. For further information about World TB Day, please visit the CDC website at <a href="http://www.cdc.gov/tb/">http://www.stoptb.org/</a>.

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JOSIE GONZALES, CHAIR.....Fifth District